Lambda Letters Project

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Sacramento, CA

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Take Back the State, Part II

by Boyce Hinman, Chief Lobbyist

Last month I wrote an article stating how the LGBT community has been far too passive politically. I said we can and should do more to demand support from elected officials in return for our support of them. I also said the poor turnout on election days gives us our community a golden opportunity to have much greater influence over elected officials. Some people asked me to do the numbers and give some examples to demonstrate my point. Read on to find out more.

Conservative estimates indicate that the LGBT community makes up roughly 2 percent of the total population. Thus we are probably 2 percent of the total number of people eligible to register and vote in California. However, barely more than 24 percent of those eligible to vote in the March primary actually did so. As a result, our 2 percent could have been 8.4 percent of those who actually voted.

Have you noticed how hard President Bush is pursuing the Latino community? He is even rebroadcasting some of his Saturday morning radio speeches in Spanish. Yet the Latino community comprises just 12.5 percent of the national population. Our 8.4 percent is not that far behind their 12.5 percent. If we had our act together, more politicians might be pursuing our votes.

It has been said that elections with high voter turnouts are good for Democrats because there are more registered Democrats than Republicans. Elections with low voter turnouts tend to be good for Republicans because their voters are more dedicated and more of them go to the polls. Our community might get more attention from politicians if we got the reputation of being dedicated voters.

But let's talk more about being 8.4 percent of eligible voters who actually vote. As you will see from Table I (see p. 13), two California State Senate races and five Assembly races were won by margins of less than 8.4 percent in the November 2000 general election. In those races, a dedicated group of voters who voted as a block could have determined who won or lost the election. That could give our community real power over elections and over legislators once elected to office.

For example, Senator Bob Margett is a conservative Republican. Lambda Letters Project gave his voting record on LGBT issues a score of just 6 percent last year. Margett won the 2000 election by barely more than 1 percent. A dedicated block of 8 percent of those voting could have denied him the election.

As of this month, SB 1618 is one or two votes short of the number of votes needed to get the bill approved by the Senate. This bill would provide additional funding for domestic abuse services. Senator Margett is not expected to vote for the bill. If he had lost his last election, we might have been one step closer to passing SB 1618.

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Lambda Letters Progress Report

Messages Collected

April, 2002	18,893 letters & e-mails
In all of 2002	53,831 letters & e-mails

Dollars Spent

April, 2002	$3,682
In all of 2002	$14,565

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Lambda Letters Project

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To promote people of color, feminist, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and HIV/AIDS status advocacy, and to bring people of color, women, lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgendered and intersex persons, and persons affected by or living with HIV/AIDS into full participation in American society.

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Women's Issue

Budget Cuts to Ravage Women, Children

by Adrienne Lauby

Governor Davis has proposed a budget that cuts county departments of social services by 20 percent across the board. These cuts will put approximately 4,900 full-time people out of work. Unemployment looks tough for these individuals, many of whom are women, but the loss of their support for California's families and children is tragic.

Less than a year ago, Governor Davis and the California legislature ignored activists and allowed energy companies to steal millions of taxpayer dollars. Davis caved in to big power companies and the legislature ratified his mistakes. Now, with services to poor women and children at risk, Davis talks about "economic recession" and "significant adjustments."

Consider losing 220 people who work on behalf of abused and neglected children. How about the 126 people who ensure that foster children are cared for and placed in a long-term family setting? Cutting these jobs means that 900 children currently waiting for adoption will wait longer and many of the 75,000 children in foster care will lose their chance for adoption.

Among these workers, 1,850 work with Medi-Cal. Without them, uninsured children will have greater difficulty receiving food stamps and affordable school lunches. Local health clinics, professionals, and pharmacies will find their fees cut, wait longer for repayment, and spend more time resolving difficulties.

These are not abstract issues. They mean fewer doctors and nurses, more time in waiting rooms, and more problems getting prescriptions and specialty care. They mean less early detection and less of the prompt coordinated treatment that reduces the suffering of breast or cervical cancer. These budget cuts delay expanding Healthy Family benefits to parents of enrolled children. Parents with chronic illnesses and abrupt traumas will continue to suffer unnecessary pain and exhaustion as they raise their children.

Twenty-percent cuts at the county level in programs for food stamps, foster care, CalWORKs, adoptions, child welfare services, and Medi-Cal are not cuts in paperclips and envelopes. They are deep cuts in food, stability, shelter, and healthcare for California's women and children. Please write your legislator to oppose the governor's budget. (Statistics and information provided by Family Action of Sonoma County and California Healthline.) ###

HIV/AIDS Issue

Support Medi-Cal for Nondisabled with HIV

by Boyce Hinman, Chief Lobbyist

Here is an example of the power of your letters when joined with those of other people from across the state. AB 2197 was approved by the Assembly Appropriations Committee. By the time you read this we expect it to be approved by the full Assembly and sent to the Senate. Today we are asking you to write to your senator in support of the bill.

AB 2197 is a health bill. It involves state spending, although by saving costs elsewhere the program created by this bill should end up being revenue-neutral to the state. Nevertheless, countless bills died on the floors of the Senate and Assembly Appropriations Committees this year. The reason for this mass legislative slaughter was the state's looming budget deficit. Health-related bills involving state spending were particularly hard hit. Yet AB 2197 is a health bill that involves state spending. What made it different? Lambda Letters mounted a massive letter-writing campaign in support of the bill. By the end of May we delivered over 5,700 letters and e-mail messages to the State Assembly in support of the bill. That likely made a major difference in the fate of this bill. Your letters do make a difference!

AB 2197 would establish the Medi-Cal Managed Care Benefits Pilot Program, which would provide Medi-Cal healthcare to the HIV-positive, but nondisabled population. Although medical services (such as care provided by doctors) would be paid for, prescription medications provided by the AIDS Drug Assistance Program would not be covered by this new program. People would still get their medications through ADAP.

The goal is to enroll at least 2,000 people who are HIV-positive and who qualify for Medi-Cal, except for the fact that they are not disabled. Generally people who are HIV-positive *and who have been diagnosed with AIDS* are considered disabled. The participants in this new program would not have full-blown AIDS.

The stimulus for this legislation is an invitation from the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid suggesting that states seek waivers in federal rules. If waivers were granted by the feds, California would be allowed to provide Medi-Cal services to this population.

We think this is a good bill. It will help people on a limited income stave off AIDS by making them qualified for Medi-Cal payment for the medical care needed to prevent progression to full-blown AIDS. We urge you to support AB 2197. ###

Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgendered Issue

More Time to Submit Hate Crimes Reports

by Boyce Hinman, Chief Lobbyist

Existing law establishes the right of all persons to be free from violence against their person or property, or intimidation by threat of violence, based on their race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, political affiliation, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, or position in a labor dispute

Existing law also provides that any person may file a complaint with the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) alleging a violation of this right. This complaint must be filed within a year of the alleged hate crime. An extension of up to 90 days is allowed if the victim learns the identity of the perpetrator only after the expiration of the one-year deadline. The complaint must state specifically the name and address of the person alleged to have committed the hate crime.

The problem with this is that frequently the victims of hate crimes do not know the identity of their assailant. Take me, for example. My domestic partner and I moved to Sacramento in 1980. For four years our neighbors tried to drive us out of the neighborhood. We had rocks thrown through our windows, hate notes pinned to our garage door, and harassing phone calls. Someone even set a small fire on our front porch. We didn't have a clue who was doing all this because, of course, they ran away before we could see them or catch them. Eventually, we did find the identity of one of our assailants and got him prosecuted in court. That ended the problem. We lived in that house for 22 more years.

But it took us a few years to identity of our assailant. The one-year and (possible 90-day extension) made the current DFEH law useless to us. In many cases the time limit for submission of a complaint, complete with the name and address of the assailant, is simply unrealistic.

SB 1945 attempts to remedy the situation by extending the time limit. It would extend the time for filing a complaint with the DFEH for a period up to one year *from the date the person becomes aware of the identity of the assailant*. However, the complaint must be submitted no later than three years from the date of the incident.

This is a good bill and we urge you to support it. Please write to the members of the Assembly Judiciary Committee and tell them to vote for this important bill.

###

People of Color Issue

Ban Racially Charged School Mascots

by Boyce Hinman, Chief Lobbyist

The people on our e-mail alert system have been hard at work supporting AB 2115, sponsored by Jackie Goldberg (D–Los Angeles). Together they delivered almost 4,300 messages of support for the bill, which won by overwhelming majorities in the first two Assembly committees. But the vote was much closer in the Assembly Appropriations Committee. There seems to be more opposition to the bill out there now. We need to turn the tide back and assure the passage of this important bill.

AB 2115 would prohibit public schools, colleges, and the state university system from using any school or athletic team name, mascot, or nickname that is derogatory or discriminatory against any race, ethnicity, nationality, or tribal group.

Why is this so important? Racial mascots promote racial stereotyping. American Indian youth, for example, are forced to see themselves as warlike caricatures, devoid of value except as tokens. These stereotypes are inaccurate and destructive and have no place in public education. Our schools are rife with conflict among various racial and ethnic groups of students. Yes, it's true: conflicts between different ethnic groups is a serious problem in our schools. It is a threat to the safety and education of our young people. It also puts teachers and other school staff at risk.

This conflict is often based upon mistaken, stereotypical beliefs about those "other" students. Unfortunately, racially charged mascot names provide one more learning experience for students. It teaches them that it's fine to put down and disparage people of other ethnic groups. This is a lesson they will carry with them the rest of their lives.

Under the circumstances it is important to do everything possible to ensure that schools send a clear message that all people should be treated with respect and consideration. Using racially charged school mascot names sends the wrong message. Acting to end the use of those names sends just the right message.

That is what AB 2115 does. The bill is still in the Assembly. However, we expect it to be sent to the Senate any day now. So we ask that you write to your member of the Senate. Urge your senator to become a co-sponsor of the bill. Please also ask him or her to persuade the committees that hear AB 2115 to approve the bill. ###

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June Legislative Update

There are a few important legislative deadlines to mention this month. **May 31** was the last day for a bill to be approved by its house of origin. For example, if a bill was introduced in the Assembly it had to be approved by the full Assembly no later than May 31. If that didn't happen the bill is dead for this year.

If a bill does get approved by its house of origin, it is sent to a policy committee in the second house for that committee's approval of the bill. For example, a bill that affects insurance companies would have to go to the Insurance Committee in the second house. These policy committees must approve the bill no later than **June 28**. In theory, the state budget must be approved and sent to the governor no later than **June 15**. That rarely ever happens and wrangling over this year's budget deficit is likely to delay passage of the budget. The legislature is scheduled to take the month of July off. However, failure to pass a budget prior to July 1 could shorten or eliminate that vacation.

Bills that might cost the state government significant money must go to the Appropriations Committee in the second house. The deadline for approval by the Appropriations Committee is not until **August 16**.

HIV/AIDS Issues

AB 925 (Dion Aroner, D–Berkeley)
Purpose: To make several changes to the laws surrounding the California Working Disabled Program (CWD). Among other changes, it would allow working disabled people to earn up to 450 percent of the federal poverty level to buy into Medi-Cal health insurance.
Status: Passed the Assembly and all necessary Senate committees. Is awaiting a final vote on the Senate floor while the author seeks the governor's support of the bill.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 1423 (Helen Thomson, D–Vacaville)
Purpose: To include licensed marriage and family therapist services, and clinical social worker services, within the scope of Medi-Cal–covered benefits to the extent that federal matching funds are available, including home- and community-based services approved by the Department of Health and Human Services, for beneficiaries with a diagnosis of AIDS (or ARC) who require intermediate care or a higher-level of care.
Status: Approved by the Assembly and sent to the Senate Health and Human Services Committee. The author has not decided yet whether to pursue the bill. If she does it will not come up for a vote in committee until May or June.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 1853 (Paul Koretz, D–West Hollywood)
Purpose: To require the state to study the adequacy of insurance company payments to doctors who treat people with HIV/AIDS.
Status: Approved by the Assembly Appropriations Committee and sent to the Assembly floor for a final vote in that house.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 2064 (Gil Cedillo, D–Los Angeles)
Purpose: To require the State Department of Health Services to authorize the establishment of training programs for counselors for publicly funded HIV testing programs by specified community-based, nonprofit organizations. The bill would require the department to establish uniform curriculum guidelines for these training programs. Would require the participating community-based organizations to follow departmental curriculum guidelines for these training programs. Costs associated with training programs administered pursuant to the bill would be absorbed by participating community-based organizations.
Status: Approved by the Assembly Appropriations Committee and sent to the Assembly floor for a final vote in that house.
LLP Position: Support, with some concern about the cost to community-based groups.

AB 2197 (Paul Koretz, D–West Hollywood)
Purpose: To require the state to establish a program to provide Medi-Cal health insurance to people who are HIV-positive and who qualify for Medi-Cal, except that they are not disabled.
Status: Approved by the Assembly Appropriations Committee and sent to the Assembly floor for a final vote in that house.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 2768 (John Longville, D–San Bernardino)
Purpose: To require each pupil to receive AIDS prevention instruction for at least four hours in junior high or middle school and four hours in high school.
Status: Failed in Assembly Appropriations Committee.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 2905 (Roderick Wright, D–Los Angeles)
Purpose: To require HIV testing be offered to all inmates in California State Prisons, subject to an

Continued on page 7

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Legislative Update

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inmate's right of refusal.
Status: Approved by the Assembly Appropriations Committee and sent to the Assembly floor for a final vote in that house.
LLP Position: Support.

SB 187 (John Vasconcellos, D–Santa Clara)
Purpose: To require the State Department of Health to establish and maintain a voluntary program for the issuance of registry identification cards to qualified medical marijuana patients, and to establish procedures under which a patient with the card could use marijuana for medical purposes. *Note:* A recent U.S. Supreme Court decision stated that, in spite of Proposition 215, a person may be prosecuted under federal law for possession of marijuana. The court said medical necessity does not justify possession. So signing up for a marijuana registry card may be signing a confession to violation of federal law.
Status: Left on the Senate floor while Senator Vasconcellos seeks to persuade the governor to sign it.
LLP Position: Oppose.

SB 599 (Wesley Chesbro, D–Santa Rosa)
Purpose: To require health plans to cover medically necessary substance-related disorders in the same way that plans cover any other medical condition. The only limit that may be placed on the coverage is a 60-day annual limit on non-hospital residential care. The bill would also require health plans to offer coverage for the treatment of alcoholism.
Status: Passed the Senate and all necessary Assembly Committees. Is in the Assembly Inactive file pending the author's decision on what to do with it. It's strongly opposed by the insurance industry. The author plans to move the bill in 2002, although he would not have to move it until the end of the year. A deal may be cut to mandate only the substance-abuse related benefits covered by CalPERS, the healthcare program for state workers. That program has some limits.
LLP Position: Support.

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SB 1315 (Byron Sher, D–Redwood City)
Purpose: To reduce prescription drug costs by establishing a multi-agency prescription drug buying pool in state and county governments and for school districts. By buying in bulk, the central purchaser may be able to lower the per-unit cost of the drugs. The central purchaser could buy drugs for other state or county government agencies unless those agencies can get the drugs cheaper.
Status: Approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee and sent to the Senate floor for a final vote in that house.
LLP Position: Support.

SB 1414 (Jackie Speier, D–San Mateo)
Purpose: To establish the Healthy Californians Program to provide healthcare and health coverage to all citizens and legal immigrants without access to affordable employer-based coverage. The state would be required to apply for federal money to supplement state funds dedicated to the program.
Status: Failed in Senate Appropriations Committee.
LLP Position: Support.

SB 1734 (John Vasconcellos, D–San Jose)
Purpose: Current law protects public entities, their agents, or employees from prosecution for distribution of hypodermic needles or syringes to participants in clean needle and syringe exchange projects authorized by the public entity pursuant to a declaration of a local emergency due to the existence of a critical local public health crisis. This bill would also protect them from prosecution for distributing materials to sanitize drug paraphernalia distributed to participants in clean needle and syringe exchange projects.
Status: Approved by the Senate and sent to the Assembly. Probably will be assigned to the Assembly Health Committee.
LLP Position: Support.

SB 1785 (John Vasconcellos, D–San Jose)
Purpose: To remove the requirement that people have a prescription to buy a hypodermic needle and syringe. Also would eliminate the requirement that a pharmacist keep records of who buys them. The bill would allow a person to posses up to 30 hypodermic needles and syringes if purchased through an authorized source.
Status: Approved by the Senate and sent to the Assembly. Probably will be assigned to the Assembly Health Committee.
LLP Position: Support.

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Legislative Update

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Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender Issues

AB 1649 (Jackie Goldberg, D–Los Angeles)
Purpose: To amend California's Fair Employment and Housing Act to ban employment and housing discrimination against transgendered people.
Status: Approved by the Assembly and the Senate Judiciary Committee. The bill may be taken up again this year. If so, it will start where it left off last year. Its first committee would be the Senate Appropriations Committee. The bill was dropped last year by the author at the request of the governor. He promised Goldberg that he'd fulfill most of the bill's purpose through new procedures at the Department of Fair Employment and Housing. The department has created new procedures. They are awaiting final approval from the governor.
LLP Position: Support. We are cosponsors of the bill.

AB 1885 (Carol Liu, D–Pasadena)
Purpose: To allow for a tax credit on the premium for continuing group health insurance if a person loses employer-provided group health insurance as a result of being laid of or being given reduced work hours by the employer. The tax credit would cover the premium for the insured and his or her spouse, domestic partner, and dependent children.
Status: Failed in Assembly Appropriations Committee.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 1908 (Rebecca Cohn, D–Campbell)
Purpose: To allow employer-paid, long-term care insurance to state employees and retirees enrolled in the public employee retirement system and to employees and retirees of the legislature, the court systems, school districts, and some local governments in California. Would also allow this employer-paid insurance for their siblings, spouses, parents, and spouses' parents.
Status: Approved by the Assembly and sent to the Senate. To be heard in the Senate Employment and Retirement Committee, possibly on June 10.
LLP Position: Support if domestic partners and the parents of domestic partners are added to the bill. The author, thus far, refuses to add domestic partners.

AB 1942 (Judy Chu, D–Monterey Park)
Purpose: To establish a pilot anti-bias training program in the Los Angeles area. The project would focus on minors in custody or on probation, probation officers, correction officers, teachers, youth service providers, social workers, parents, and community members. The goal of the program would be to reduce hate crimes.
Status: Approved by the Assembly Appropriations Committee and sent to the Assembly floor for a final vote in that house.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 2131 (Bill Leonard, R–Rancho Cucamonga)
Purpose: To provide that if a state or local firefighting, law enforcement, or patrol member gets one of several blood-borne infectious diseases on the job, and a dependent of that person gets the disease from the person, the dependent shall be eligible to receive an award of compensation under the workers' compensation laws to the same extent as the injured person is eligible to receive an award of compensation. The award could include monthly healthcare for the duration of the disease for the medical costs associated with the disease.
Status: Approved by the Assembly referred to the Senate Labor and Industrial Relations Committee. May be voted on in that committee on June 12.
LLP Position: Support if former domestic partners added to the bill.

AB 2216 (Fred Keeley, D–Santa Cruz)
Purpose: Under the existing law of intestate succession, the surviving spouse is entitled to a specified share of the decedent's separate property that is not effectively disposed of by will. This bill would extend this

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entitlement to a decedent's domestic partner.
Status: Approved by the Assembly and sent to the Senate. Not assigned to a committee yet.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 2484 (Hannah-Beth Jackson, D–Santa Barbara)
Purpose: To prevent and reduce school violence by requiring school districts to provide instruction and materials on the prevention of school terrorism through recognition and reporting prior to the occurrence of the violence.
Status: Passed by the Assembly and Referred to the Senate Education Committee for a hearing on June 6.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 2651 (Judy Chu, D–Monterey Park)
Purpose: To establish goals to protect gay and lesbian foster children and gay and lesbian foster parents and caregivers.
Status: Approved by the Assembly and sent to the Senate. May be assigned to the Senate Health and Human Services Committee.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 2777 (Joe Nation, D–San Rafael)
Purpose: To allow Santa Barbara and Marin counties to offer death benefits, optional retirement allowances, or survivor's allowances to the domestic partners of county employees and retirees.
Status: Approved by the Assembly and sent to the Senate Public Employment and Retirement Committee. No hearing date set yet.
LLP Position: Support.

SB 1661 (Sheila Kuehl, D–Los Angeles)
Purpose: To provide workers compensation payments to workers who take family leave to care for seriously ill family members, including domestic partners.
Status: Failed in Senate Appropriations Committee. Author hopes it will be approved in a second vote in the committee.
LLP Position: Support.

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SB 1945 (Sheila Kuehl, D–Los Angeles)
Purpose: To give victims of hate crimes more time to submit hate crimes complaints to the Department of Fair Employment and Housing.
Status: Passed the Assembly and sent to the Senate. Probably will be assigned to the Assembly Judiciary Committee.
LLP Position: Support.

People of Color Issues

AB 5 (Thomas Calderon, D–Montebello)
Purpose: To prohibit an insurer from refusing to issue or renew insurance on a private passenger car, or other property, solely on the basis of a consumer credit report.
Status: Approved by the Assembly and sent to the Senate Insurance Committee. The author plans to move the bill, but it may not be heard until May or June.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 14 (Jackie Goldberg, D–Los Angeles)
Purpose: To state the intent of the Legislature to examine the state school facilities program to ensure that allocation formulas reflect the current and future needs for public kindergarten to 12th grade and to examine and assess the needs of the higher educational system, including funding distributions.
Status: Approved by the Assembly and Senate. Assembly refused to concur with changes made in the Senate. Is in a two-house conference committee.
LLP Position: Neutral.

AB 32 (Keith Richman, R–Granada Hills)
Purpose: To create the Cal-Health program, which would provide coordination of the Healthy Families and Medi-Cal programs. The bill would authorize providers to screen and temporarily enroll individuals in Medi-Cal and the Healthy Families Program at the time the person is provided with medical care, and would require full reimbursement of the provider for services covered under those programs. The bill would require licensed hospitals, clinics, and other health facilities to inform individuals about Cal-Health and, in the case of urgent or emergency services, the bill would require that individuals be informed about the program and given an opportunity to apply after services have been rendered. The bill would expand eligibility under the Medi-Cal program to adults with family incomes at or below 250 percent of the federal poverty level, and would require the state to apply to the federal government for waivers to allow federal funds to be used in that regard.
Status: Held in the Senate Appropriations Committee. No word yet on the author's plans for the bill.
LLP Position: Support.

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AB 1749 (John Longville, D–San Bernardino)
Purpose: To require the governor to proclaim the third Saturday in June each year as "Juneteenth National Freedom Day: A Day of Observance" and to urge the people of California to join in celebrating this day to honor and reflect on the significant role that African Americans have played in the history of the United States and how they have enriched society through their steadfast commitment to promoting brotherhood and equality.
Status: Approved by the Assembly and sent to the Senate Governmental Organization Committee for a hearing on June 4.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 1751 (Elaine Alquist, D–San Jose)
Purpose: To require high schools to offer courses of study relating to the economics of higher education and instruction on completing forms relating to student financial aid.
Status: Failed in Assembly Appropriations Committee.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 1806 (Keith Richman, R–Granada Hills)
Purpose: To require the state to increase participation in Medi-Cal by maximizing to the fullest extent possible the amount of income and resources that medically needy individuals are allowed to retain for purposes of Medi-Cal eligibility. The bill would specify that its provisions would be implemented only to the extent that federal financial participation is available.
Status: Approved by the Assembly Appropriations Committee and sent to the Assembly floor for a final vote in that house.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 1807 (Keith Richman, R–Granada Hills)
Purpose: To require the department to develop a form for the temporary qualification and accelerated enrollment of a child in the Healthy Families Program and the Medi-Cal program. The bill would require that a healthcare provider, as defined, be reimbursed for services, and a pharmacy be reimbursed for prescribed drugs, provided to a temporarily qualified child under these provisions to the same extent and in the same manner as a healthcare provider or pharmacy providing services to a child who is fully enrolled and eligible for benefits under the Healthy Families Program or the Medi-Cal program.
Status: Approved by the Assembly Appropriations Committee and sent to the Assembly floor for a final vote in that house.
LLP Position: Support.

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AB 1891 (Manny Diaz, D–San Jose)
Purpose: To require the Department of Housing and Community Development to establish a program to make matching grants, from money appropriated by the Legislature, to local agencies that have housing trust funds, to provide financing for affordable housing to be occupied primarily by low- and very-low-income persons and families. The bill would become operative only if the Housing Bond Act of 2002, as proposed by Senate Bill 1227, is enacted by the voters.
Status: Approved by the Assembly Appropriations Committee and sent to the Assembly floor for a final vote in that house.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 2115 (Jackie Goldberg, D–Los Angeles)
Purpose: To prohibit public schools, colleges, and the state university from using any school or athletic team name, mascot, or nickname that is derogatory or discriminatory against any race, ethnicity, nationality, or tribal group.
Status: Approved by the Assembly Appropriations Committee and sent to the Assembly floor for a final vote in that house.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 2165 (Virginia Strom Martin, D–Santa Rosa)
Purpose: To reduce the shortage of qualified pharmacists in California, particularly in inner-city and rural areas, by allowing pharmacists from other states, who have passed nationally recognized licensing exams, to qualify to work in California.
Status: Approved by the Assembly Appropriations Committee and sent to the Assembly floor for a final vote in that house.
LLP Position: Support.

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SB 492 (Richard Polanco, D–Los Angeles)
Purpose: To require the Department of Health Services to request federal waivers so that foreign medical graduates now in the U.S. serving certain designated "health shortage areas" can remain here in the U.S. The waivers would focus on physicians who serve Medicare, Medi-Cal, low-income, and uninsured clients. Some of them, under their current visas, must soon return to their native country for two years.
Status: Has passed the Senate and all necessary Assembly committees. Is currently in the Assembly inactive file.
LLP Position: Support.

SB 1264 (Dede Alpert, D–San Diego)
Purpose: Existing law provides for the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) program, under which each county provides cash assistance and other benefits to qualified low-income families. Certain types of payments received by recipients of aid under the CalWORKs program are prohibited from being treated as income or resources of the family and from being deducted from the amount of aid to which the family would otherwise be entitled. This bill says that any award or scholarship provided by a public or private entity to, or on behalf of, a dependent child based on the child's academic or extracurricular achievement or participation in a scholastic, educational, or extracurricular competition may not be treated as income or resources of the family for purposes of determining eligibility under the CalWORKs program.
Status: Approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee and sent to the Senate floor for a final vote.
LLP Position: Support.

Women's Issues

AB 130 (Tony Cardenas, D–Mission Hills)
Purpose: To expand and reorganize a state-funded family-planning program to make it a comprehensive preventive and health screening program for low-income women under 65. Would provide funding for family-planning services, but specifically excludes funding for abortion-related services or advice. Current law already prohibits spending for abortions and this law leaves that provision unchanged.
Status: Approved by the Assembly and sent to the Senate Health and Human Services Committee. Author has not decided whether to move the bill. Even if she does the bill would probably not be voted on in commit-

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Legislative Update

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tee until May or June.
LLP Position: Support with reservations about the abortion issue.

AB 1860 (Carole Migden, D–San Francisco)
Purpose: To provide a female victim of sexual assault with the option of postcoital contraception. Emergency contraception shall be dispensed upon the request of the victim.
Status: Approved by the Assembly and sent to the Senate Public Safety Committee for a hearing on June 4.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 1909 (Rebecca Cohn, D–Campbell)
Purpose: To allow—subject to adequate, discretionary funding from a city or county—that the superior courts in San Diego County, in Santa Clara County, and in any other county willing to participate, develop a demonstration project to identify the best practices to follow in civil and criminal cases involving domestic violence. The bill would require superior courts participating in this demonstration project to report their findings and recommendations to the Judicial Council and the Legislature.
Status: Approved by the Assembly and sent to the Senate Judiciary Committee. No hearing date set yet.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 1915 (Alan Lowenthal, D–Long Beach)
Purpose: To require the Department of Motor Vehicles to provide a new set of license plates to a registered owner of a vehicle who appears in person and submits a completed application and also presents to the DMV the previously issued plates, proof of identity and vehicle ownership, and either evidence of victimization by a domestic abuser or evidence of efforts to get assistance in regard to the domestic abuse, as specified.
Status: Approved by the Assembly and sent to the Senate Transportation Committee for a hearing on June 4.

AB 2030 (Jackie Goldberg, D–Los Angeles)
Purpose: To allow courts upon request to waive the fee for serving a protective order, restraining order, or injunction if that order or injunction is based upon specified acts or threats.
Status: Approved by the Assembly. Probably will be referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee.
LLP Position: Support.

SB 564 (Jackie Speier, D–San Mateo)
Purpose: To require applicants for licensure as a psychologist; marriage, family, and child counselor —or social worker who began graduate study on or after January 1, 2004—to complete a minimum of 15 contact hours of coursework in spousal or partner abuse assessment, detection, and intervention strategies. Those who were licensed earlier than that date would be required to take continuing education courses in the above subjects.
Status: Passed the Senate. Double-referred to the Assembly Business and Professions Committee and the Assembly Health Committee. Will be heard in the Business and Professions Committee on June 4.
LLP Position: Support.

SB 1291 (Ray Haynes, R–Riverside)
Purpose: To require the state to issue special auto license plates that say "Choose Life." All proceeds from the license plates would go to non-governmental agencies that provide counseling and other services that meet the needs of pregnant women who are committed to placing their newborn children for adoption. Funds could not go to any agency that is associated with abortion activities, counseling for or referrals to abortion clinics, providing procedures related to medical abortions, or pro-abortion advertising.
Status: Referred to Senate Transportation Committee. The bill is dead because it is past the deadline for the bill to be approved by the committee.
LLP Position: Oppose.

SB 1301 (Sheila Kuehl, D–Los Angeles)
Purpose: Current law states that prior to the performance of an abortion, a medical committee must determine that continuation of the pregnancy would impair the physical or mental health of the mother, or that the pregnancy resulted from rape or incest. This law instead states that every person has the right to (a) choose or refuse birth control and (b) to choose to bear a child or obtain an abortion. The bill says the state shall not deny a woman's right to obtain an abortion unless the procedure is to be performed or assisted by one not properly licensed by the state or unless the attending physician thinks the baby could live outside the uterus *and* the doctor believes the abortion is not needed to protect the life and health of the mother.

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Status: Approved by the Senate. Sent to the Assembly. May be referred to the Assembly Judiciary Committee. No hearing date set yet.
LLP Position: Support.

SB 1320 (Sheila Kuehl, D–Los Angeles)
Purpose: To revise and strengthen the definition of the crime of stalking.
Status: Approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee. Awaiting a final vote on the Senate floor.
LLP Position: Support.

SB 1365 (Jackie Speier, D–San Mateo)
Purpose: Current law allows taxpayers, until January 2003, to include an extra payment with their state income tax return and to designate that extra money to be used to support breast cancer research. This bill would extend the program until January 2008.
Status: Approved by the Senate and sent to the Assembly. Probably will be assigned to the Assembly Revenue and Tax Committee
LLP Position: Support.

SB 1399 (Gloria Romero, D–Los Angeles)
Purpose: To send people to jail for up to one year or fine them up to $2,000, or both, if they flee the state to avoid paying court-ordered spousal support.
Status: Approved by the Senate and referred to the Assembly Public Safety Committee. No hearing date set yet.
LLP Position: Support.

SB 1618 (Sheila Kuehl, D–Los Angeles)
Purpose: To raise the marriage license application fee from $23 to $33. The $10 increase would fund domestic violence shelters, $6 of which would target the creation of domestic violence shelters in underserved areas and populations.
Status: Approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee. Awaiting a final vote on the Senate floor.
LLP Position: Support.

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2nd Mon. San Mateo - Hillsdale United Methodist, 36th & Hacienda
2nd Wed. San Jose - 1st Cong. Church, 1980 Hamilton Ave. & Leigh
3rd Sat. Gilroy - Kaiser Medical Offices, 7520 Arroyo Circle
3rd Thurs. Menlo Park - St. Bede's Episcopal, 2650 Sand Hill Rd.

Take Back the State, Part II

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Table I. Selected Results of the 2000 General Election

House	Name	Party	District	Margin
Senate	Michael Machado	D	5th	0.5%
Senate	Bob Margett	R	29th	1.1%
Assembly	Rebecca Cohn	D	24th	5.5%
Assembly	Tony Strickland	R	37th	4.9%
Assembly	Keith Richman	R	38th	6.8%
Assembly	Dennis Mountjoy	R	59th	5.0%
Assembly	Dave Kelley	R	80th	8.2%

Senator Mike Machado won his election by less than one percent. A dedicated LGBT block of voters could have significant influence over his votes in the state legislature.

Assemblymember Rebecca Cohn won her Senate seat by only 5.5 percent. This year she introduced AB 1908 to provide *employer paid* long-term care insurance for many state and local government employees and their families. The bill specifically includes coverage for the employee's spouse, children, parents, parents in-law, and brothers and sisters. Yet the Assemblymember has refused my personal requests to add domestic partners, and she ignored Lambda Letters' e-mailed letter-writing campaign requesting the addition of domestic partners. If Assemblymember Cohn faced a dedicated and united LGBT community in her district, she might have been more accommodating.

Assemblymembers Kelley, Mountjoy, and Strickland each received scores of less than 50 percent from Lambda Letters for their votes on LGBT issues last year. As noted, Senator Margett's score on LGBT issues was only 6 percent. If a dedicated, united LGBT electorate had engineered their defeat in 2000, the voting records of the victors might have been considerably better. The likelihood of that would be even greater if it were known that the LGBT community played a major part in the election outcome.

Radio commentator Paul Harvey is fond of saying, "Self government requires self discipline." I don't agree with a lot of what he says, but I do agree with that sentiment. Our community's refusal to take disciplined, united action in the elective process is a major reason for the slow pace in the advancement of gay rights. Think about it. What are you doing for the cause?

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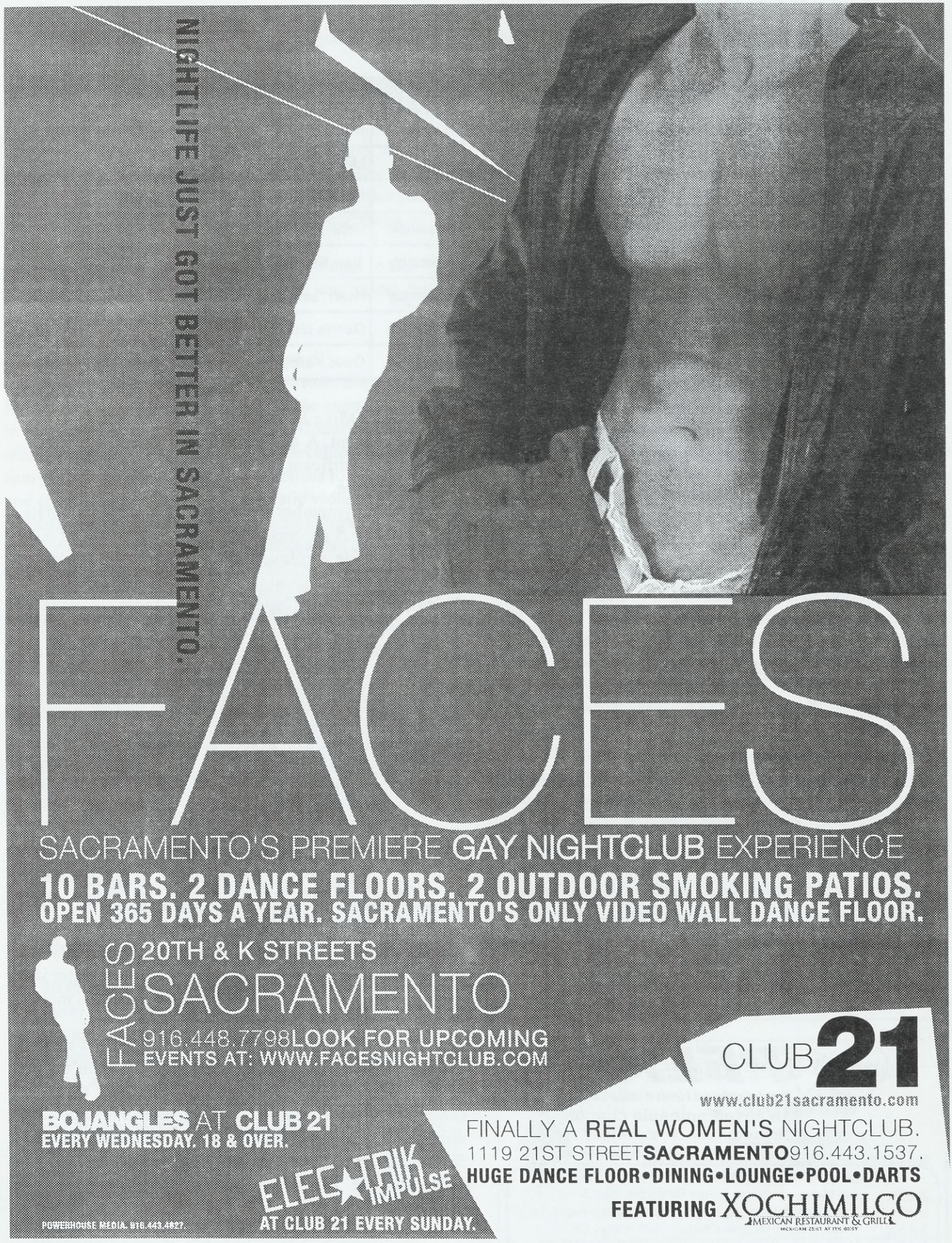
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